comments received from different quarters, the Draft Bill was recast and circulated to Central Ministries concerned and State Governments/ UTs. Comments received are under consideration.

(b) The objective of the proposed Nyaya Panchayats Bill is to provide a sound institutionalized, alternative forum at the grassroots level with community involvement for dispute resolution through mediation, conciliation and compromise.

The Draft Nyaya Panchayats Bill provides for establishment of Nyaya Panchayats at the level of each Village Panchayat or a cluster of Village Panchayats. The Nyaya Panchayats are proposed to be constituted through the election of the Nyaya Panchas by people residing in the area to which the jurisdiction of the Nyaya Panchayats extends. Provisions are proposed for the reservation for women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to ensure their representation in the Nyaya Panchayats. The Draft Bill defines the civil, criminal and additional jurisdiction of Nyaya Panchayats. In the Draft Bill, conciliation is proposed as primary means of dispute resolution. Further, Nyaya Sahayaks, who will assist the Nyaya Panchayats in performing their function of dispute resolution, have been proposed. Nyaya Panchayats are proposed as separate and independent dispute resolution bodies, distinct from the Gram Panchayats.

(c) No firm date in this regard can be given as the Draft of the Nyaya Panchayats Bill is under consideration.

Indo-Iran joint commission meeting

685. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA:
SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had paid a two-day visit to Iran on July 29-30 to attend the India-Iran Joint Commission meeting;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether he had discussed the long pending Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project during the visit; and

(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes. The visit to Iran on 29-30 July 2008 was to attend the NAM Ministerial meeting.

(c) Yes.

(d) The Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline project was discussed during bilateral meetings with the President and Foreign Minister of Iran.

Attack on embassy in Kabul

686. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA:
SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Embassy in Kabul was attacked recently and about 41 people including four Indian officials were killed;